



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/521,114	01/11/2005	Jochen Hofmann	53988/DBP/M521	4800
23363	7590	07/24/2006	EXAMINER	
CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE, LLP			WHITE, RODNEY BARNETT	
PO BOX 7068			ART UNIT	
PASADENA, CA 91109-7068			PAPER NUMBER	
			3636	

DATE MAILED: 07/24/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/521,114

Applicant(s)

HOFMANN ET AL.

Examiner

Rodney B. White

Art Unit

3636

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 July 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- /1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- /3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 24-25 and 32-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 24, line 10, "the structural frame group" lacks antecedent basis.

In claim 32, lines 4-5, "the adjustment device" (2 instances) lacks antecedent basis. Claim 32 depends from claim 31 where an adjusting device is claimed.

Applicant is reminded to use consistent terminology throughout the claims.

The aforementioned problem renders the claims vague and indefinite. Clarification and/or correction is required. Applicant needs to read through the claims to check for other such problems the Examiner may have missed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Blasin (U.S. Patent No. 4,368,916).

Blasin teaches a seat arrangement for a motor vehicle seat, comprising: a seat base 2 which defines a seat surface for a vehicle occupant and extends in a longitudinal direction of the seat; and backrest 1 wherein the backrest is adjustable longitudinal direction of the seat relative to the seat base by a lever arrangement (See Figures 2 and 8), wherein the longitudinal direction of the seat extends along a longitudinal axis of the vehicle in relation to the position of the seat arrangement installed in a motor vehicle, wherein the lever arrangement is formed by two spaced apart articulated levers 11, 19 which are attached on one side to an element 19 displaceable together with the backrest and on the other side 11 to a floor unit at 3", wherein the lever arrangement is formed by two displacement levers, which are parallel to each other, wherein the backrest is additionally movable in the longitudinal direction the seat by a longitudinal guide 3", wherein the backrest is movable the lever arrangement into at least two different longitudinal positions, which longitudinal positions are lockable, wherein the lever arrangement for moving the backrest in the longitudinal direction of the seat engages on a structural frame unit on which the backrest is mounted, wherein the backrest foldable about a pivotal axis onto the seat surface, wherein the pivotal axis is moved along a predetermined path as the backrest is folded forwards onto the seat surface, wherein the pivotal axis is formed by a physical structural unit of the seat arrangement, wherein the pivotal axis is formed by a bearing axis through which the backrest is mounted on a structural frame unit, wherein the pivotal axis is automatically

guided along the predetermined path as the backrest is folded forwards, wherein the pivotal axis is automatically guided by a guide device which extends along the predetermined path, wherein the guide device is formed by a guide slide 3", wherein the pivotal axis is automatically guided by a guide element through which pivotal axis connected a structural frame unit and which is moved as the backrest is folded forwards, wherein the guide element is longitudinally extended, wherein the guide element comprises a guide lever wherein the backrest is connected additionally outside of the pivotal axis for articulation to a structural frame unit, wherein the backrest is connected outside the pivotal axis to the structural frame unit through a coupling element which extends from the backrest structural frame unit and moved as the backrest rest folds forward, wherein comprises a coupling , wherein the backrest is connected outside of the pivotal axis to the frame unit through a guide device which guides a section of the backrest as it folds forward, , wherein movement of the pivotal axis along a predetermined path as the backrest folds forward controlled through the interaction of the backrest with the structural frame unit outside of the pivotal axis, wherein the pivotal axis is automatically guided along a predetermined path by means one of a guide device extended along this path and by a guide element through which the pivotal axis connected to the structural frame unit and and the movement of the pivotal axis along the predetermined path is controlled by one of a coupling element and a guide device by which the backrest is connected to the structural frame group outside of the pivotal axis, wherein the pivotal axis is moved on a closed path as the backrest is folded forwards, wherein as the backrest is

Art Unit: 3636

folded forwards the pivotal axis is moved from one end to another end of an open path curve and back to the one end of the path curve, wherein as the backrest +R+ folds forward the pivotal axis is moved at least during part of the folding movement along a direction which is substantially opposite the direction of the folding movement, further comprising a locking mechanism for locking the pivotal axis in a position which corresponds to at least one of a backrest raised up in the useful position and in a position which corresponds to a backrest folded forwards down onto the seat, wherein the locking mechanism for locking the pivotal axis comprises a locking lever wherein an adjusting device is provided to set an incline of the raised-up backrest between different useful positions, further comprising a locking device for locking a previously set incline of the backrest, wherein the locking device comprises one of the self-locking design of the adjustment device and a brake associated with the adjustment device, further comprising a separate locking device which interacts with the adjusting device wherein the locking device comprises a primary locking element +9G+ which for locking the adjusting device acts on same, and a second locking element with which the primary locking element is lockable in a position in which acts on the adjusting device, wherein the secondary locking element brings the primary locking element out of engagement with the adjusting device in order to be able to change the incline of the backrest, wherein the seat surface is formed by a seat cushion mounted on the seat base, wherein the backrest is movable by the lever arrangement into two different longitudinal positions are longitudinal, which longitudinal positions are lockable (See Figures 1-2, 4-5, and 7-8 and specification).

Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dal (EP Patent No. 205409 A1).

Dal teaches a seat arrangement for a motor vehicle seat, comprising: a seat base 4 which defines a seat surface for a vehicle occupant and extends in a longitudinal direction of the seat; and backrest 2 wherein the backrest is adjustable longitudinal direction of the seat relative to the seat base by a lever arrangement (See Figures 1-3), wherein the longitudinal direction of the seat extends along a longitudinal axis of the vehicle in relation to the position of the seat arrangement installed in a motor vehicle.

Claims 1-2, 4, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Mizobuchi (JP Patent No. 06227299 A).

Mizobuchi teaches a seat arrangement for a motor vehicle seat, comprising: a seat base 4 which defines a seat surface for a vehicle occupant and extends in a longitudinal direction of the seat; and backrest 2 wherein the backrest is adjustable longitudinal direction of the seat relative to the seat base by a lever arrangement (See Figures 1(a)-1(b) and 4(a)-4(b), wherein the longitudinal direction of the seat extends along a longitudinal axis of the vehicle in relation to the position of the seat arrangement installed in a motor vehicle, wherein the lever arrangement is formed by two displacement levers, which are parallel to each other, the longitudinal positions being lockable.

Claims 1-2 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Talbot Motor (GB Patent No. GB 2095984 A).

Talbot Motor teaches a seat arrangement for a motor vehicle seat, comprising: a seat base 10 which defines a seat surface for a vehicle occupant and extends in a longitudinal direction of the seat; and backrest 11 wherein the backrest is adjustable longitudinal direction of the seat relative to the seat base by a lever arrangement, wherein the longitudinal direction of the seat extends along a longitudinal axis of the vehicle in relation to the position of the seat arrangement installed in a motor vehicle, wherein the backrest foldable about a pivotal axis onto the seat surface

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Haland et al, Hanagan, and Marinelli teach structures similar to the present invention.

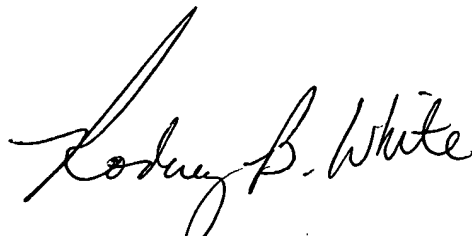
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rodney B. White whose telephone number is (571) 272-6863. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Cuomo can be reached on (571) 272-6856. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3636

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Rodney B. White,
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3636
July 20, 2006



RODNEY B. WHITE
PRIMARY EXAMINER